

MASSACHUSETTS CONSUMERS' COALITION

AN ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES AFFILIATED TO PROMOTE CONSUMER INTERESTS

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Cambridge Consumers' Council
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February 29, 2000

William E. Kennard, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington DC 20554

Dear Chairman Kennard:

I am writing you to urge you and the FCC to establish clear guidelines that broadcasters in my community must follow as they begin to use digital signals and expand their channel capacity to reach us all via television. As I watch local television, especially news and public affairs type of programming I believe more and more that the existing effort to meet current obligations of local broadcasters are remise.

I have a special interesting consumer issues as the director of a consumer protection agency and chair of a state-wide consumer organization. While I can point to some local stations such as Channel 7 (NBC affiliated) and Channel 5 (ABC Affiliated) as stations that have consumer reporters with regular segments, I must say that all too often their segments focussed primarily of drama appealing scams discussed with the aid of hidden cameras to catch high pressured sales activities or "sleazy" car dealers, and then confronting them and little more.

The potentially in-depth shows that might go beyond the dramatic brief piece are always buried in Sunday morning time slots. Only New England Cable News seems willing to afford decent time allotments or time slots to more substantial discussion of consumer issues. The networks seem to also mainly defer to the Dateline/20-20/60 Minutes network world to cover consumer issues.

In Massachusetts a major 100 page piece of legislation was filed last year addressing every aspect of privacy from the grocery store to the Internet. It will be a long time in the negotiation and re-write phase before a final, passable bill comes out of this effort yet minimal attempts have been made to address the issue, analyze the proposed legislation, etc. by local TV stations, especially the network affiliates. It deserves more that being a one-day media story on the bill filing date.

Massachusetts is certainly in the midst of a substantial debate over the issue of Broadband Open Access to ISP and also the issue of whether Bell Atlantic is ready to be permitted to enter the long distance telephone service arena. The buying and selling of Cable TV companies has been rampant in Massachusetts. I simply cannot recall one decent local network offering some in-depth coverage of these complex issues. Such stories cry out for more time and attention than reporting on a sports score or weather report needs to take. They are confusing, complex issues than impact consumers future daily lifestyles and pocketbooks considerable.

Massachusetts has many wonderful educational facilities that focus on disabilities such as learning disabilities, sightlessness, and physical or mental rehabilitation. There are local disabilities groups working with cities and towns to tackle major physical access challenges in old New England communities and buildings and also access to public transportation. I wish one of these schools or programs received 15 minutes of coverage every time another news broadcast focussed on "Where is Whitey Bulger, the South Boston gangster and FBI informant!"

Fortunately for us we are blessed with the New England Cable News station and with our beloved public broadcast station, WGBH, and receive some of these positive and informative stories that way. I can't help but feel, though, that the local network affiliates are simply deferring to these two successes and also the national network programming to "fulfill" this public mission and information need.

Cambridge, my city, just held two incredible events within a week of each other to Honor Black History Month. Both events honored diversity, the arts, public services and simply community efforts to live and flourish in a diverse spirit of community. One event was held in City Hall in the evening and the second event was held mid-day today at the main post office and included an unveiling ceremony of the Patricia Roberts Harris Stamp and the talents of local black artists and leaders were showcased. The crowds were good at both but no TV cameras came to either event even though a press release went out. What did the evening news focus on today? ...primary elections, another school shooting and a local doctor charged with shooting his wife.....

I believe very strongly that the lucrative opportunity presented to broadcasters with digital TV and the golden opportunity for us citizens to learn and see more through greater choice on TV needs the guiding hand of our government creating some operating rules and parameters that must be followed. Please allow further review and input through a rulemaking process as a result of this inquiry process.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Paul J. Schlaver, Chair
Massachusetts Consumers' Coalition

New York

Tab D-1b

Elizabeth Cohen
Staten Island, NY
1/3/00

Linda Cookingham
Kingston, NY
2/28/00

Lucile Middleton (Bridge The Gap Family Day Care Network)
New York, NY
2/29/00

Shirley Middleton (Bridge The Gap Family Day Care Network)
New York, NY
2/29/00

Toby Miller
New York University - Dept. of Cinema Studies
New York, NY
2/29/00

Sonia Ossorio (NOW)
New York, NY
2/29/00

Florence Rice
Harlem Consumer Education Council, Inc.
New York, NY
3/1/00

From: mizlizz4u@aol.com
To: bkennard@fcc.gov
Date: 3 Jan 2000

Elizabeth Cohen
76 furness place
staten island, NY 10314-6206

Chairman William E. Kennard
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Kennard:

I am a seventeen year old female from new york city. I have been watching television since I can remember, and I've seen it change over the years (besides the types of programs I watch). It has grown more and more disgusting, as I would hope you would be aware of by now. In fact, I have just about stopped my T.V. watching, and I find it pretty amazing that a seventeen year old can be so fed up with the programs on T.V. They literally disgust me - sex, violence, vulgar language, inappropriate actions, etc. To see half naked kids my age pretending to be kids in junior high is absolutly abhorrent. Where is the education? The good old fashioned values?

Do you have children, Mr. Kennard? Do you want your kids watching filth and trash on T.V.? If you do, then I believe I can safely say I have lost respect for you and the television business.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Cohen

CC:
Representative Vito Fossella
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan

Date: Mon, 28 Feb 2000

From: Edward & Linda Cookingham <dogwood@ulster.net>

Subject: Public Interest Obligations

To: FCC Commissioner, William Kennard

From: Linda Cookingham, Private Citizen
1134 Dogwood St.
Kingston, NY 12401

Attention:

My name is Linda Cookingham and I live in the Hudson Valley, approximately 90 miles north of New York City. My husband and I tune in the NYC TV stations for the daily news and are distressed that our "local" news is rarely broadcast. In fact, the stations are hard pressed to include the Hudson Valley in their weather reports. I can report that FOX news does have the Town of Poughkeepsie on their weather map and CBS shows as far north as Newburgh, NY. This hardly serves Kingston or our surrounding areas.

The point I am trying to make is that we watch the news for local information, in hope that these "local" broadcasters will serve their entire viewer audience, not just the greater NYC area. My husband and I both work for a NYS Agency and are honest citizens who pay taxes. So, why is it that we only see the Hudson Valley visited by NYC reporters when they're looking for horrific or negative news to splash over the airwaves? Stories like the Tawana Brawley Case or just recently, the Poughkeepsie serial killer, motivated those stations to send reporters to get the trashy and gory details.

I have lived in the Hudson Valley for nearly 30 years and never can I remember a time when a NYC-based television station has sought our local opinions on politics or other news worthy topics concerning the state of New York. Relevant news from the Hudson Valley is not aired nor do we have broadcasters seeking expert opinions from our community members. It is my hope to see an increase in representation for the Hudson Valley. Local broadcasting stations receive licenses for free in exchange for serving public interest. Our local stations are not earning the right to their free licenses because they are not serving the "entire" public interest. My public interest has not been served in local public affairs programming, politics, weather, etc.

I whole-heartedly agree with all of the recommendations that have been put forth by People for Better TV in regard to public interest obligations for the new era of digital broadcasting. I strongly suggest that the FCC immediately hold rule-making sessions to determine the public interest obligations of local broadcasting stations. As an American citizen I believe, first and foremost, that local broadcasters should serve their viewers with information that is relevant to their local communities. Without rules in place, I do not believe local broadcasting stations will voluntarily serve the public interests.

It is my greatest hope that my voice will be heard and that the FCC Commission will uphold it's responsibilities to all American citizens.
Thank You!

Lucile Middleton
Bridge The Gap Family Day Care Network
Manhattanville Station, P.O. Box 5528
New York, NY 10007

Federal Communications Commissioners
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

February, 29 2000

Dear Commissioners,

In all of my years I have never realized the significant adverse influence that television has on children. My realization is attributed to my getting up early (8am-12pm) and watching the television programs on channels 7 and channel 4. It is so easy to let a lot go unnoticed when you are not setting a keen eye on what you are looking at. Not identifying or singling out any one show because it is safe in this case to make an assumption, the themes that radiate from the programs are that violence is okay, popularity is important, one never dies when in a violent situation and that it is okay not to be intelligent. These themes are then down played with the numerous public service announcements that obviously contradicts what the program has or is depicting, (which in reality is only noticeable by the mature audience and totally unrelated to the child who watches the notice). What makes the PSA so humorous is that they are done by actors and actresses that children see on other programs, which makes it difficult for them to see the relevance because they are not individuals they can identify with. Where is the reality? What relevance does such announcements provide for children who are watching. There is no connection made. Therefore as a future educator I do not see what is educational about these early morning cartoons.

The other thing that became apparent is the amount of advertising that is directed to children. In one half an hour program I saw roughly 10 to 15 commercials that could plant a false idea in children's that in order to have true happiness you have to have this particular product. How terrible is this? With such an idea planted in children's minds they will never be happy because they always need to have that toy, that cereal, that clothing, etc.

If we do not hold them accountable now then when?

Sincerely,

Lucile Middleton

Shirley Middleton
Bridge The Gap Family Day Care Network
Manhattanville Station, P.O. Box 5528
New York, NY 10007

Federal Communications Commissioners
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

February, 29 2000

Dear Commissioners,

I see the game is the same, the difference is I am older and the players are different. Why can't people understand that elders aren't where they are in life just by mistake? On February 24th 2000, I went to NBC and ABC with my daughter to gain entry to the public records and I cannot believe the run around they tried to give me. I say tried because I could see right through the game. The stories I got were ridiculous. I know the best way to avoid a person that you truly do not want to have any dealings with is to say that they are not in. And to no surprise to myself that is exactly what they did. The key person who handled the records was phantomus. I guess they use the same phantomus approach when planning programs. Not only did we not gain entrance, but also we were told at one station that the person we knew handled the files (and who had spoken to my associates, just the day before) was not an employee.

After reflecting on the programs that I personally grew up on and programs that my children watched when they were growing up and comparing them to what I saw on channels 7 and 4, I noticed a tremendous difference. The themes that were illustrated back when my children were younger were less abstract and less violent. However colorful and "animated" the cartoons and the programs are today, the themes are frightening. They perpetuate an idea of violence and they put a false idea in children's mind that violence solves everything and like the cartoons or the characters they are invincible. Which is by far the furthest from the truth. And all of these programs that are on today are a contributing factor of why the violence rate among small children and teenager is on the rise.

Sincerely,

Shirley Middleton
Bride the Gap

Toby Miller
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721 Broadway, Room 600
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Federal Communications Commissioners
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

February, 29 2000

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Toby Miller. I am a Professor of Cultural Studies and Cultural Policy at NYU, and the author of several books on television.

My analysis of the Fox news disturbed me greatly. First, its long initial period of commercial-free reports, mostly local and fairly comprehensive, was followed by single stories punctuated by numerous commercials. All these later stories were insubstantial--the weatherman's battle with his waistline was allocated five minutes, for example. No story in the second period dealt seriously with local matters. But even within the first segment, with few commercials (designed to keep viewers watching through the bulk of the program to follow) there were very problematic ways of presenting stories that were insensitive to the community. For example, some quite competent, balanced reporting of the Diallo and Louima stories segued seamlessly into identikit pictures of black men accused of rape and interviews with white residents of an area of the city, along with additional cries to be afraid and to dial 911--suddenly, blacks were the enemy again, and the police an ally. No attempt to disentangle the stories was made, or to be reflexive about how linking them might make viewers feel.

In terms of issues that should be covered in an hour of news ostensibly dedicated to localism, consider the following: non-Mayoral, borough politics; the environment; social-movement organization; education (one story told parents their children were at risk on the internet 'A predator, after your child, is just one click away'--very irresponsible reporting not backed up with time-series statistics), city services, and a raft of other topics.

I am hoping that the FCC will pay serious attention to the question of localism in the new digital environment, especially given the poor standard of local news in today's transitional moment.

Sincerely,

Toby Miller
Department of Cinema Studies

National Organization for Women
in New York City
Sonia Ossorio
Chair of media committee
150 W. 28th St. #304
New York, New York 10001
212-627-9895

February 29, 2000
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Kennard:

Over the last month the National Organization for Women in New York City has been documenting coverage of local programming in an effort to determine if local television stations are upholding their commitment to public interest programming by covering topics and events in the area of women's issues.

This report documents broadcasters clearly are not. Broadcasters have urged you to issue voluntary guidelines regarding their public interest obligations. What is needed is mandatory broadcasting requirements to ensure women's voices, concerns, and accomplishments are part of their public programming.

A public hearing is needed to hear from those of us in the community who are concerned about women's access to the media and women's image as presented by the media. We urge the FCC not to give away public property without requirements on how to serve the public.

As it stands, too many vital issues and perspectives of importance to the nation remain unexpressed and unexamined. Digital broadcasters should be required to use the new power of digital transmission to expand the number of perspectives expressed over the public airwaves.

The airwaves are a public trust, yet Congress has given exclusive control of those airwaves to major corporations. What do women get from the seven corporations that control what is broadcast to American living rooms?

Not much. Women continue to be marginalized; as serious women in business, sports and policy making. The issues important to women, that must be brought forth for debate; substandard child care, pay inequity and the glass ceiling are not examined, highlighted

and presented as current American problems. Marginalized as women's problems, these issues become more of a private dilemma for individual families to deal with, rather than issues of collective interest of the community.

In exchange for free use of the airwaves, broadcasters are suppose to act in the public interest. Women have never had fair representation and equal access to the airwaves. The public often gets just the opposite: Programming that is filled with harmful and negative images and outdated stereotypes of women.

While it was impossible to determine from local station's public files the degree to which women were marginalized in general news coverage and public programming shows as experts and sources, this insidious problem has been documented by media and women's organizations.

In 1996, 87% of the guests on Sunday public affairs programs were men. Nearly 60% of all guests invited to appear on "Today" and "Good Morning America" were male. And women represent only 14% of business news stories, according to the report "Women, Business, and the Media," commissioned by the International Women in Media Foundation and Catalyst, a research firm specializing in women in business.

Women's voices will continue to be under-represented in television public programming as long as present practices persist. Only 21% of correspondents are women, and there are only eight female vice presidents at major networks, according the Executive Female.

Review of CBS Public Files

State of the files

The public files at CBS were orderly and neat, however, information of public programming was not detailed or thorough. A year's worth of public programming was outlined in 19 pages, of which many of those pages had lots of white space.

The public files room at CBS was accessible and had a desk. I was asked, however, what organizations I represented, which is prohibited. Also, CBS charged 50 cents a page for copies, an inflated prices that discourages the public from making copies. This is not accessibility.

It was difficult to find specifics on public programming for women because the files are not categorized under subjects. A table of content with categories and references to the pages on which examples can be found would be very helpful.

CBS's public files did not contain ascertainment files and their involvement with community outreach programs, such as public service announcements. PSAs serve an important function in a media environment which often blurs news, advertising and

entertainment. A PSA is a clear message of information. CBS should include their PSAs to represent a more balanced picture of how they are serving the public interest.

CBS is not doing its fair share of local programming. The only local programming outside of news coverage is "Sunday Edition."

Review of Content of CBS Public Files

In a review of the past four quarters at CBS's public programming obligation, there was scant mention of public interest coverage on women. Domestic violence coverage dominated this front.

Besides two segments on health issues concerning women (both had to do with pregnancy) and one news segment on the influence of women in the Christian and Jewish ministries, the only issue of concern to women covered by local programming was domestic violence, the most-often reported story about women in general

Clearly an important and serious issue, but when it is the only category of information the public receives about women, it ends up making women look like victims, or more specifically, only victims.

This is a huge disservice to women.

In the area of violence towards women, a debate is heating up locally over a statue of limitations of five years in rape cases. This is an extremely timely story because DNA testing is pinpointing rapists who cannot be charged for the crime because the statue of limitations has run out. If women are to organize and appeal to their political representatives to introduce legislation to change this law, they must first know about this news.

In a story about AIDS, there is no mention in the public files of it being relevant to women. The fact is that women are the fastest-growing population contracting the AIDS virus.

Mention of the Memorial Day Parade does not include women. During the last year, finally, women's contributions and involvement fighting for their country have started to get recognized; yet their inclusion is not part of the Memorial Day Parade coverage CBS lists as public programming.

In a discussion of a female politician, three men debate the aspirations of Hillary Clinton. No women's voice, no female pundits are brought to the discussion.

As for sports, CBS virtually ignored women's athletics and professional sports. On Tuesday Feb 22 during the 5 p.m. newscast CBS, "previewed" the upcoming Sports

Illustrated swimsuit edition bringing no opposing views to the coverage, no mention that professional female athletes make up less than 10% of serious sports coverage in the magazine throughout the year. This has been a debate, controversy and fight for women's organizations for years. What's worse, is then CBS had no stories about female athletes in its sports segment. So CBS served the public interest by "previewing" a sports magazines edition of women as sex objects, not noting that this magazines coverage of professional female sports is dismally low. In line with Sports Illustrated's marginalization of female athletes, CBS did not cover women's sports in its own broadcast.

The following day, Feb 23 on its 11 p.m. the CBS newscast showed clips from men's NCAA games, but not any women's NCAA games, eventhough the women's team is the leagues best team right now. CBS did not even find women's NCAA games worthy of being on the scoreboard which flashed to give viewers a quick glance at that day's games. Feb 23 two important women's regional games played; Uconn and Rutgers.

The following day, again, women in sports are ignored. Feb 24 11 p.m. news CBS reported 6 sports stories. Not one featured women's sports or a female athlete, even though a beautiful opportunity existed to feature the countries top women's collegiate team or some of its top players in this series.

During the 5:30 p.m. newscast on CBS Feb. 23, there were no stories for or about women in all areas, health, politics, domestic violence, women in business. The only story covered focusing on women was a 30 second story on Tonya Harding, sensational coverage of the former ice skating Olympic contender for being drunk and assaulting her boyfriend.

On channel 11 (UPN) Wed. Feb. 23 10:30 p.m. newscast the only story on women was the bride from the "Who Wants To Marry a Mult-millionaire." However on UPN, Uconn women's basketball game did get a soundbite on their victory that day.

On Friday Feb. 25, Men Against Sexism, a local organization, protested the swimsuit issue of Sports Illustrated. CBS did not cover this event.

There were no mentions of the landmark sexual harassment laws put in place that are civil rights milestones for women in the workplace. Follow up to this hugely significant event would be in the public interest.

The National Organization For Women in New York City won a court case against the New York State division of human rights to force them to set up policies to improve response time and lower backlog of employment discrimination suits filed with the state. CBS, nor FOX, nor any other television station responded to press announcements of this legal victory won by NOW.

The Susan B. Anthony awards, which honors women in the community who have improved the lives of women, was not covered by any television station.

The above-mentioned examples are only a few of the events and issues relating to women local New York City television stations simply ignored. This applies to both CBS and FOX, the two stations discussed in this report.

Review of FOX Public Files

Fox's public files room was not accessible to the public. To review files one had to sit on the floor. There were no chairs or desks. Area would not likely accommodate a wheelchair.

Fox does have a community affairs director.

Fox public programming files were very neat, detailed and clear. The station documents its public programming thoroughly and extensively.

Segment time and total time dedicated to subjects are noted. Very informative and useful detail for stations to include.

Fox did include a table of contents, however a subject category for women was not part of that.

In the fourth quarter FOX mostly covered health issues for women. Although women's coverage was limited to a great degree to one subject, the health coverage was fresh, going beyond the well-tethered stories that are often the easiest to cover. For example, in the fourth quarter FOX informed the public about how women are more likely to develop lung cancer; how Blacks and Latinas are most commonly affected by breast cancer; new foundation raising awareness and funding for women under 40 with breast cancer.

A good amount of attention was given to Black and Latina women's health issues.

FOX also covered issues of significance to young women; teen dating and violence, the prevalence of abusive relationships and advice on how to steer clear of violent men.

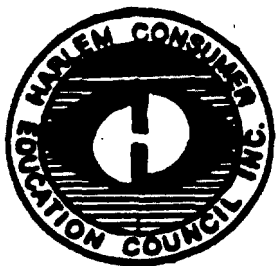
Another story on FOX focused on teen magazines and how they portray unrealistic body images for young girls.

While FOX covered a women's health, and a couple young girl's issues, women were rarely mentioned in any of the following categories FOX accounts for; sports, govt. politics, environment, transportation. Women were mentioned in crime and murder, in reference to stories about a serial rapist, a woman attacked with a brick and a teacher who allegedly molested a female high school student.

In addition, FOX did a good job at documenting the station's PSAs and community outreach. In the fourth quarter, FOX was involved with the NY Coalition of 100 Black Women and the NY Asian Women's Center. No details on how FOX was involved was noted.

FOX ran a PSA on breast and ovarian cancer fund raiser 13 times in the fourth quarter, yet that was the only one listed.

Wed 10 pm Fox news Feb. 23 no sports coverage of Women's NCAA basketball although two important regional games played that night: Uconn and Rutgers.



Harlem Consumer Education Council, Inc.

P.O. Box 1165 Triboro Station, New York, N.Y. 10035 (212) 795-0234

**FLORENCE M. RICE
PRESIDENT**

**LUCIL LAZELLA MIDDLETON
PRESIDENT
YOUTH CONSUMERS EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL**

March 1, 2000

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Florence M. Rice. I am a citizen, great grandmother, consumer advocate and community leader here in Harlem. I have been a resident of this close community since 1936 and it is my personal opinion that Harlem has been extremely neglected by local television broadcasters.

We live in a time of rapid change in technology and especially in communications. I would like to specifically focus on the transition from analog to digital broadcasting. Most of the members of my community here in Harlem receive their information primarily from television. The local news broadcasts are not considered "entertainment" in my community and I, like many others, resent any local station's claims to be serving my community's interest.

As a consumer advocate and President of Harlem Consumer Education Council I must point out that on inspection of the public files at WABC, WNBC, WCBS and WNYW there was no reference to consumer oriented reports. Are we all not consumers of some type? Local broadcasters definitely remember that fact during "commercial breaks". Many of the local stations do have consumer segments, yet they are not deemed relevant enough to include in their public files. WNBC-4 includes crime, education, ethnic, government/politics, health and housing/homeless and WABC-7 include cultural and racial relationships, the economy and economic issues, education and the school system, health and healthcare issues, quality of life and the environment and women's issues. In this thriving economy where more people are spending money, local broadcasters should pay greater attention to their viewer's financial "well-being" and cover more stories on "consumer fraud" by local vendors.

My concern in relationship to "bad press" has led me as a mother-in-law to reflect over the years that my daughter has been married to the same loving and caring man, and how during all of these years of marriage, children, grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren he has been steadfast in his commitment to family. I honor him and the many other African American men taking care of their families in New York. Local broadcasters should also honor these men by including them in their local news broadcasts instead of dedicating these precious minutes to the likes of "Puffy Combs".

Why is it that "Puffy Combs" an African American musician accused now of bribery as well as assault, received 30 seconds of airtime on channel 2-WCBS's 11 o'clock news and 1 minute on FOX 5's 10:00pm These news segments are considered "good" news reporting. "Why"? They do not discourage crime but perpetuate the stereotype that all African American men are "criminals". Why on 2/29/00 FOX 5's 10:00pm news was Howard Stern and his program of obnoxious behavior worth three minutes of airtime yet the tragic flooding in Mozambique that left thousands of people displaced from their homes only received 30 seconds of airtime? My local news focuses primarily on the rich and famous New Yorkers seeking publicity. It is a great disappointment everyday to sit at home only to watch local

broadcasters provide famous people with "free" publicity. Where are the local interest pieces on the news? An example of how local stations ignore the local interest, opting to cover the rich or famous happened on May 26th 1999.

Columbia University's spring commencement was held on that day, and honored African Americans like Mohammed Ali while outside the commencement ceremony, local citizens picketed. Along with 20 others, I picketed Columbia University's hypocrisy. A local organization called "Fight Back" was outraged that one the largest institutions in Harlem (Columbia University) honored African Americans at the commencement ceremony, yet contributed to the conditions of poverty in the surrounding community. "Fight Back" accused Columbia University of hiring "outside" vendors and contractors. I like many others believed that they ignore the wealth of human resources here in Harlem, so we held a protest. There were local stations at the commencement ceremony, people were interviewed and short television segments were produced on the graduation and Mohammed Ali's award. However, our protest was not covered meaning it was not considered newsworthy? People in my community ask the question "Why are our interests less important than Mohammed Ali or the graduating students at Columbia University?" Local stations wanted the famous and wealthy (glamorous) story instead of telling the truth, my truth and my community's truth. Enough is enough.

As local stations make the transition from analog signals to digital I want the FCC to step in and protect local communities. The FCC should immediately start proceedings to determine the public interest obligations of digital broadcasters. I am concerned that when an associate of mine visited our local broadcasting stations the same theme of "we only put in the public files what our lawyers tell us too or what the network says to put in the files" was repeated from station to station. If the majority of stations do not take the initiative to voluntarily include public ascertainment files why would they voluntarily serve the public interest without any rules? For the reasons listed above I fear that without rules in place, local stations will not serve my community's interest. People For Better TV is a coalition that has outlined modest suggestions for rules addressing this matter, I strongly urge the FCC to consider these recommendations and immediately hold rule making sessions to determine local broadcasters public interest obligations.

Thank you,

Florence M. Rice

2

SOUTHEAST

Georgia

Tab D-2a

Mrs. Susie Green
Jonesboro, GA
2/21/00

Ms. Doshia Harris
Austell, GA
2/28/00

Ms. Marlyn Hill
College Park, GA
2/25/00

Ms. Carolyn Jenkins
Stockbridge, GA
2/19/00

Mrs. Pam Parks
Jonesboro, GA
2/24/00

South Carolina

Tab D-2b

Angela Frazier
Columbia Consumer Educational Council
Columbia, SC
2/26/00

Matilda Foster-Garner
Columbia, SC
2/21/00

Dorothy Garrick
Columbia Consumer Education Council South Carolina
Columbia, SC
3/7/00

Rebecca Rogers
Carolina Peace Resource Center
Columbia, SC
2/22/00

Ruth Simpson
A. Philip Randolph Institute
Columbia, SC
2/28/00

**Mrs. Susie Green
949 Forest Point Way
Jonesboro, GA 30236**

February 21, 2000

**Chairman William Kennard
Federal Communication Commission
445 1 2nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554**

Dear Chairman Kennard:

I am writing to urge the FCC to set a date to establish clear guidelines for broadcasters in my community who are sending digital signals.

I believe that local broadcasters should be required to ascertain the needs of all segments of my community and air programs accordingly. In my community there is a lack of local minority programs that include positive role models. There is a lack of Hispanic and Native American speaking programs and our children are bombarded with commercials advertisements or with advertising disguised as entertainment on educational programs.

I am recommending that digital broadcasters be limited to no more than four commercials, no more than sixty seconds long, per hour during children's program and digital broadcasters must make every effort to show programs that reflect the community in a positive way. They must also hire and promote more minorities.

Again, I am Urging you to set clear guidelines for broadcasters as soon as possible.

***Thank you for your support and allowing me to
participate in this inquiry.***

Sincerely,

Sadie Green

**MS. DOSHIA HARRIS
1153 SUMERTONE TRACE
AUSTELL, GA 30168**

FEBRUARY 28, 2000

**CHAIRMAN WILLIAM KENNARD:
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
445 12TH STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20554**

DEAR CHAIRMAN KENNARD:

**PLEASE ACCEPT THIS LETTER AS MY RESPONSE TO THE
NOTICE OF INQUIRING ON THE PUBLIC INTEREST OBLIGATIONS
OF BROADCASTERS.**

**I UNDERSTAND THAT TELEVISION BROADCASTERS IN MY
COMMUNITY HAVE BEGUN USING ADDITIONAL PUBLIC
AIRWAYS TO BROADCAST DIGITAL TELEVISION SIGNALS. I AM
CONCERNED ABOUT THE AFFECT IT HAS ON THE VIEWING
AUDIENCE IN MY COMMUNITY. TELEVISION CAN BE A VERY
GOOD THING, IF IT IS USED WISELY AND PROPERLY
CONTROLLED. TELEVISION CAN BE EDUCATIONAL,
INFORMATIVE, ENTERTAINING, AND THOUGHT PROVOKING OR
IT CAN CAUSE PEOPLE TO WANT THINGS THAT ARE NOT GOOD
FOR THEM, BE PASSIVE AND UNCREATIVE OR EVEN BECOME
VIOLENT.**

**I THINK THAT LOCAL BROADCASTERS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO
SET ASIDE AN HOUR A DAY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR
CHILDREN ON ALL THE CHANNELS THEY BROADCAST;
BROADCASTERS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN FOUR
COMMERCIALS, NO MORE THAN SIXTY SECONDS LONG, PER
HOUR DURING CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS, AND PARENTS SHOULD
GET THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT
THE PROGRAMS THEIR CHILDREN ARE WATCHING.**

I AM URGING THE FCC TO SET A DATE TO ESTABLISH CLEAR GUIDELINES FOR BROADCASTERS, AND NOTIFY ME ABOUT THEIR OBLIGATION TO SERVE MY COMMUNITY. PRESENTLY, BROADCASTERS IN MY COMMUNITY ARE NOT SERVING OUR NEEDS.

THANK YOU FOR ANY AND ALL ASSISTANCE THAT YOU CAN RENDER IN THIS PROCESS.

SINCERELY,

DOSHIA HARRIS

Ms. Marlyn Hill
6370 Forest Down Circle
College Park, GA 30349

February 25, 2000

Chairman William Kennard:
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Kennard:

I am responding to The Notice Of Inquiring on the public interest obligations of broadcasters.

It is very important that the FCC set a date to establish clear guidelines for the broadcasters in my local community that are sending digital signals. It is unfair for the broadcasters to be given free public airwaves and not meeting the needs of my community.

Television plays an important role in my home, and I am concerned about the lack of local programming addressing the needs in my community such as:

- The lack of programming accessible to the disabled.
- The lack of Spanish speaking programs
- The lack of programs portraying minority in positive roles
- The lack of African American local programs
- The amount of violence on television and the high cost receiving digital signals.

Again, I urge the FCC to establish clear guidelines for broadcasters in my community who are sending digital signals as soon as possible.

It is important for people like me to know what I can expect from my local broadcasters in return for them getting such valuable public resource - free airwaves.

Thank you for your time and effort for making it possible for me to participate in the inquiry.

Sincerely,

Marlyn Hill
